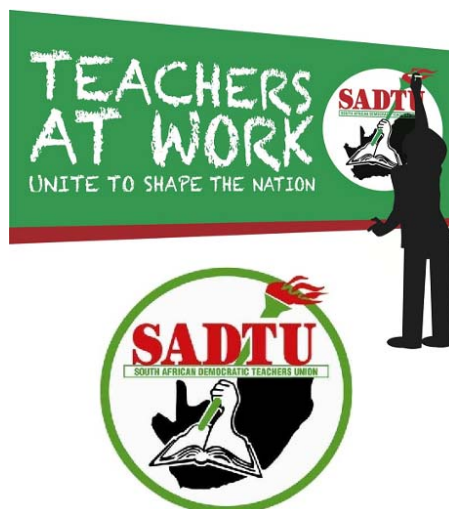




Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela
18 July 1918 – 5 December 2013

18 July, birth anniversary of **Nelson Mandela**

A resource-book for educators



Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

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Part 1



South African Government **Department of Communications**

Message, 7 July 2014:

Government calls on South Africans to embrace the opportunity to celebrate the Mandela Month by giving of 67 minutes of their time to build a cleaner and better South Africa.

South Africans are urged to take action, inspire change and make every day a Mandela Day. The 2014 Mandela Month celebration is particularly symbolic as it is the first one since former President Nelson Mandela's passing. South Africans must uphold Mandela's legacy of ensuring that all humans are provided equal opportunities to a better life."

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly declared 18 July, Madiba's birthday, Nelson Mandela International Day which will be dedicated to his work and the values he lived by. The day is also dedicated to the service of our fellow human beings by actively helping to change their circumstances.



ANC Centenary address on the Tenth President of the ANC, 10 July 2012:

Inside our country, even those who were, and who are still, fundamentally opposed to the ANC, and who fought tooth and nail to keep South Africa a racist pariah state, now claim [Tenth President of the ANC] Nelson Mandela as their own.

Such is the power of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, a unique and great statesman who is able to win over even his enemies.

Today we celebrate Madiba in all his capacities. We honour Madiba the revolutionary, the first uMkhonto Wesizwe Commander-in-Chief, the first Volunteer in Chief of the ANC and the architect of the MPlan.

We honour Madiba the symbol of our struggle and of the triumph of South Africans over apartheid colonialism, and Madiba the first President of a free and democratic South Africa.

President J G Zuma



Leaving court with Moses Kotane, Treason Trial, 1956

Part 2: Early life

Rolihlahla Mandela was born into the Madiba clan in Mvezo, Transkei, on July 18, 1918, to Nonqaphi Nosekeni and Nkosi Mphakanyiswa Gadla Mandela, principal counsellor to the Acting King of the Thembu people, Jongintaba Dalindyebo. His father died when he was 12 years old (1930) and the young Rolihlahla became a ward of the king at the Great Place in Mqhekezweni.

He attended primary school in Qunu where his teacher Miss Mdingane gave him the name Nelson, in accordance with the custom to give all school children “Christian” names. He completed his Junior Certificate at Clarkebury boarding school and went on to Healdtown, a well-known Wesleyan secondary school, from where he proceeded to the University College of Fort Hare. There he met Oliver Tambo. At different times, both were expelled for protest activity, and left the Eastern Cape for Johannesburg.

Mandela arrived in Johannesburg in 1941 and got a job as a mine security officer. He met Walter Sisulu, an estate agent. Mandela was introduced by Sisulu to a firm of attorneys, where he became an articled clerk and was able to qualify as an attorney.

In 1944 he married Walter Sisulu’s cousin, Evelyn Mase, a nurse. In August 1952, Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo established South Africa’s first black law firm, Mandela and Tambo.



Walter and Albertina Sisulu, wedding photograph, 1944

Evelyn Mase is to the left of the groom and Anton Lembede is to the right of the bride. Nelson Mandela (best man) is far left. Rosabella Sisulu looks out over the couple. [Wikipedia]

Part 2, continued: The 1940s

Dr A B Xuma became President of the ANC in 1940. In 1942 the ANC's Conference decided to form a Youth League, which came into being in 1944 with Mandela, Sisulu and Tambo among its members. In 1943 the ANC took the decision to admit women to its membership, and to form the Women's League which was fully formed by 1948. Also in 1943, the ANC adopted the African's Claims document, which incorporated a Bill of Rights. In 1946 the ANC supported the Passive Resistance Campaign led by the South African Indian Congresses, and in 1947 signed the "Three Doctor's Pact" that bound the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses to the ANC, one of the building blocks of the bigger alliance formed at the Congress of the People, eight years later, in 1955.

In 1948, the National Party was elected to power by the white electorate, with a mandate to institutionalise racism and strict "apartheid".

Although it was itself one of the innovations of Dr Xuma's Presidency, the new ANC Youth League was not satisfied with the pace of change. Mandela, Tambo, and the others of the ANC Youth League adopted a Programme of Action in 1949, which they then took to the ANC leadership. Dr Xuma refused to support it, so the Youth League backed Dr James Sebe Moroka, who was duly elected President in December of that year, and the ANC adopted the Youth League's Programme of Action. Walter Sisulu was elected ANC Secretary-General. Dr Xuma remained a member of the NEC.

So it was that the young Nelson Mandela was active in all of the great formative changes that made the ANC into what it became in the era of its main, and eventually successful, struggle.



Dr A B Xuma



Dr Moroka, Nelson Mandela, Dr Dadoo, 1952



Dr J S Moroka

Part 3: The 1950s

The new National Party government was determined to suppress opposition by all available means. To oppose the new legislation, the ANC and other organisations called a “stay-at-home” - a strike where the workers do not picket or demonstrate, but stay indoors - for 1 May 1950.

On May Day during working hours the stay-away was a success, but in the evening the regime’s police started attacking people in the township streets and massacred 18 in Alexandra and the West Rand. The National Party government passed the Suppression of Communism Act and the Communist Party of South Africa was forced to disband.

The response of the ANC and its allies was to call another stay-away for June 26th, 1950. This one was an even bigger success, and there was no massacre.

The ANC and its allies in the Joint Planning Council then called on the government to repeal the Suppression of Communism Act, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Representation of Voters Act, the Bantu Authorities Act, the pass laws and the stock limitation laws, and gave a deadline of 29 February 1952, following which it would launch a Defiance Campaign of Passive Resistance on June 26th, 1952.

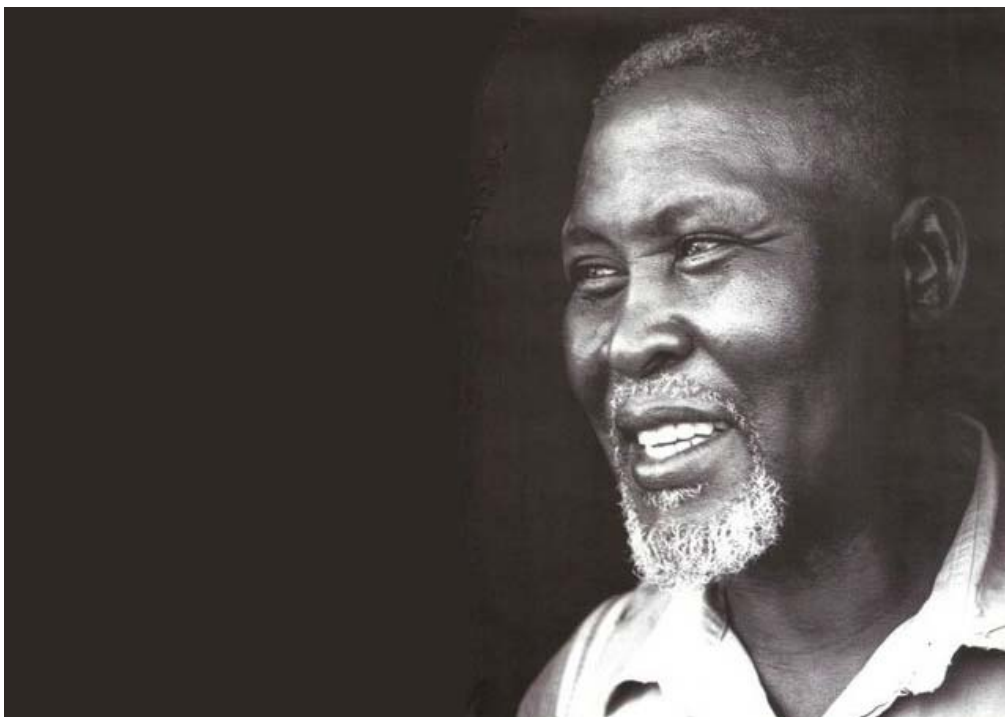


Nelson Mandela, attorney

Nelson Mandela, as the Volunteer-in-Chief of the 1952 Defiance Campaign, and as the author of the ANC’s new cellular organisation plan, called the M-plan, was by now in the front rank of the liberation movement, where he remained for the rest of his long life.

On 30 July, 1952, 21 leaders of the ANC were arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act, including ANC President Dr Moroka, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, JB Marks, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, and Ahmed Kathrada. They were charged under the Suppression of Communism Act for their part in the campaign and sentenced to nine months hard labour, suspended for two years. Later in the same year, Mandela was made a “banned person” for the first time.

By October 1952 more than 8000 volunteers had been arrested in the Defiance Campaign. By the end of the year, the membership of the ANC had grown to 100,000 from the previous level of 7,000. But the Defiance Campaign was called off, and new tactics were adopted. Dr Moroka was replaced as ANC President by Chief Albert Luthuli.



President of the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli

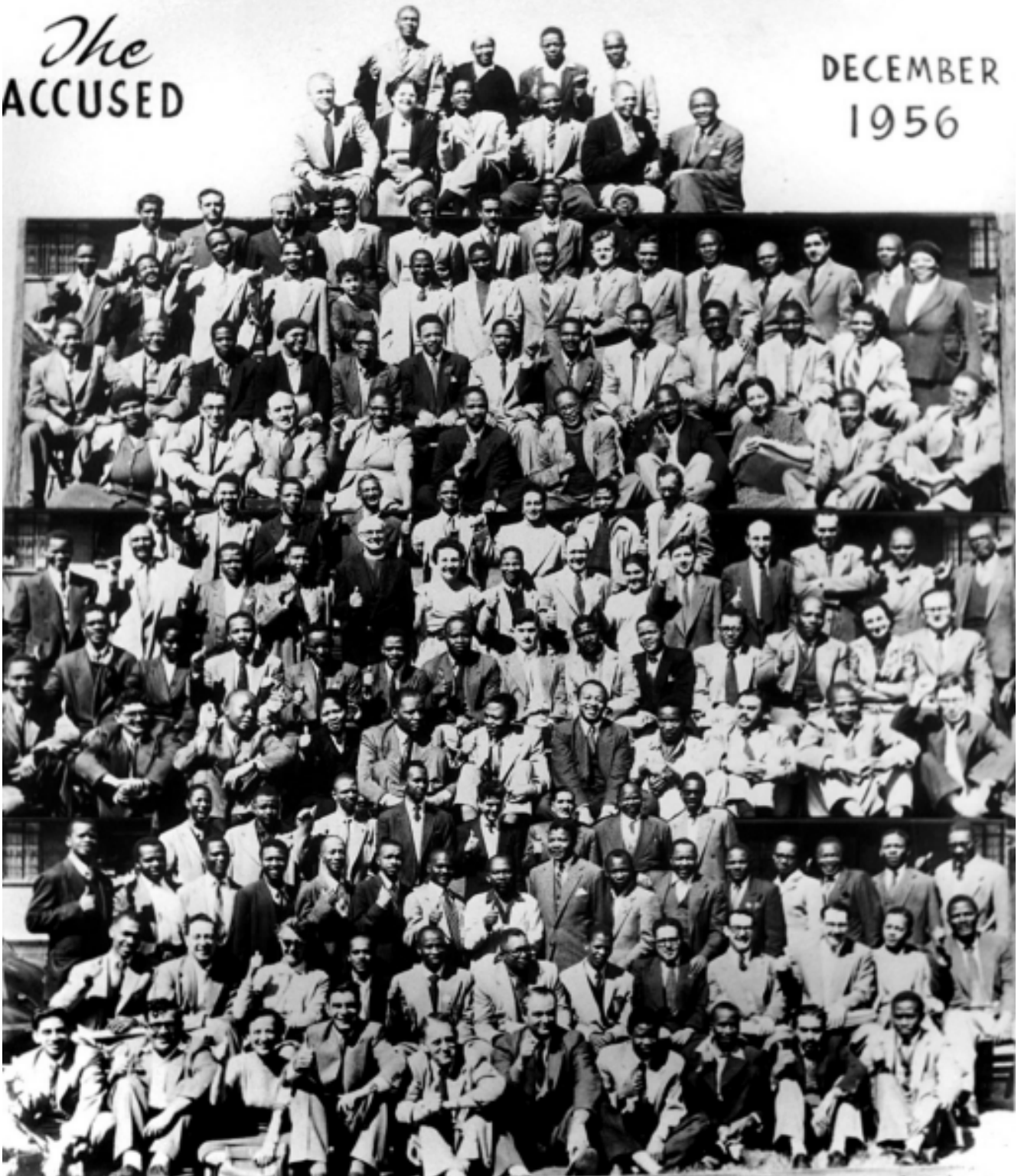
The new tactic was the Call to the Congress of the People, to be held at Kliptown on 25th and 26th June, 1955. Mandela, still restricted, could only watch from a distance while South Africa’s great Freedom Charter was adopted.

Nelson Mandela was arrested in a countrywide police swoop on 5 December 1955, which led to the 1956 Treason Trial. 156 men and women of all races found themselves in the dock in the marathon Johannesburg trial that only ended when the last 28 accused, including Mr Mandela, were acquitted on 29 March 1961.

TREASON TRIAL

The
ACCUSED

DECEMBER
1956



Treason Trial composite image by Eli Weinberg, 1956
Nelson Mandela is in the centre of the third row.

Part 4

The 1960s to the 1980s

On 21st March 1960 the new Pan-Africanist Congress, which had split off from the ANC the year before, held a demonstration in Sharpeville, during which police opened fire, killing 69 people. The regime then banned both the PAC, and the ANC.

In 1961, with the five-year Treason Trial still continuing, Nelson Mandela travelled to Pietermaritzburg to speak at an All-in Africa Conference, which resolved that he should write to Prime Minister Verwoerd requesting a non-racial national convention, and to warn that should he not agree there would be a national strike against South Africa becoming a republic. Mandela went underground and began planning a national strike for 29, 30 and 31 March, 1961. In the face of massive mobilisation of state security the strike was called off early. In June 1961 Mandela was asked by the movement to lead the armed struggle and helped to establish Umkhonto weSizwe, the people's army, also known as "MK".

On 16 December 1961, MK launched its first guerrilla attacks against government installations.

On 11 January 1962, Nelson Mandela secretly left South Africa. He travelled around Africa and visited England and other countries. He received military training in Morocco with the Algerian FLN, and in Ethiopia, and returned to South Africa in July 1962. He was arrested in a police roadblock at Tweedie near Howick on 5 August 1962 while returning from KwaZulu-Natal where he briefed ANC President Chief Albert Luthuli about his trip.



Mandela and Tambo (photo taken in Addis Ababa in 1962)



Memorial at Tweedie, KZN, where Nelson Mandela was captured on 5 August 1962

Mandela was charged with leaving the country illegally and inciting workers to strike. He was convicted and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

On 11 July 1963 the high command of MK was arrested at Liliesleaf Farm, Rivonia. On 9 October 1963 Nelson Mandela was brought from prison to join the others on trial for sabotage in what became known as the Rivonia Trial.

On 11 June 1964 Nelson Mandela and seven other accused, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Denis Goldberg, Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni, were convicted and the next day were sentenced to life imprisonment. Nelson Mandela was in prison for a total of 27 years.

Mandela was not at the 1969 Morogoro, Tanzania, conference that adopted the ANC's "Strategy and Tactics". He was in prison seven years later when the youth of Soweto rose up, and still in prison another six years after that when the National Union of Mineworkers was formed in 1982, followed by the United Democratic Front in 1983, and COSATU in 1985.

After 1985 the regime began to talk to Nelson Mandela in prison, and then to the ANC in exile. Mandela was once again in the front rank, and his walk from captivity on 11 February 1990 after the ANC and the SACP were officially unbanned, was a great moment in the history of the world.



11 February 1990, Nelson Mandela walks free, with Winnie Mandela



Alfred Nzo, Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo, Joe Nhlanhla

Part 5

The 1990s and after

In 1991, the ANC held its first conference inside the country since its banning in 1960. Mandela was elected as President, Walter Sisulu as Deputy President, OR Tambo as National Chairperson, Cyril Ramaphosa as Secretary General, Jacob Zuma as Deputy Secretary General and Mendi Msimang as Treasurer General.

The continuity of the ANC is visible from the 1940s to today, and a strong part of it has been Nelson Mandela.

Mandela took the front position in the CODESA talks from 1991, held the country together when Chris Hani was murdered in 1993, and led the ANC to a 62% victory in the first South African universal-franchise election in 1994, when he became President of the country.



Ramaphosa, Mandela and Zuma leading the CODESA talks in 1993

The first five years of democratic government established majority rule and passed the new Constitution. President Mandela's personal prestige and support was crucial to this and to many other foundational and necessary moves during the first five years of full democracy.



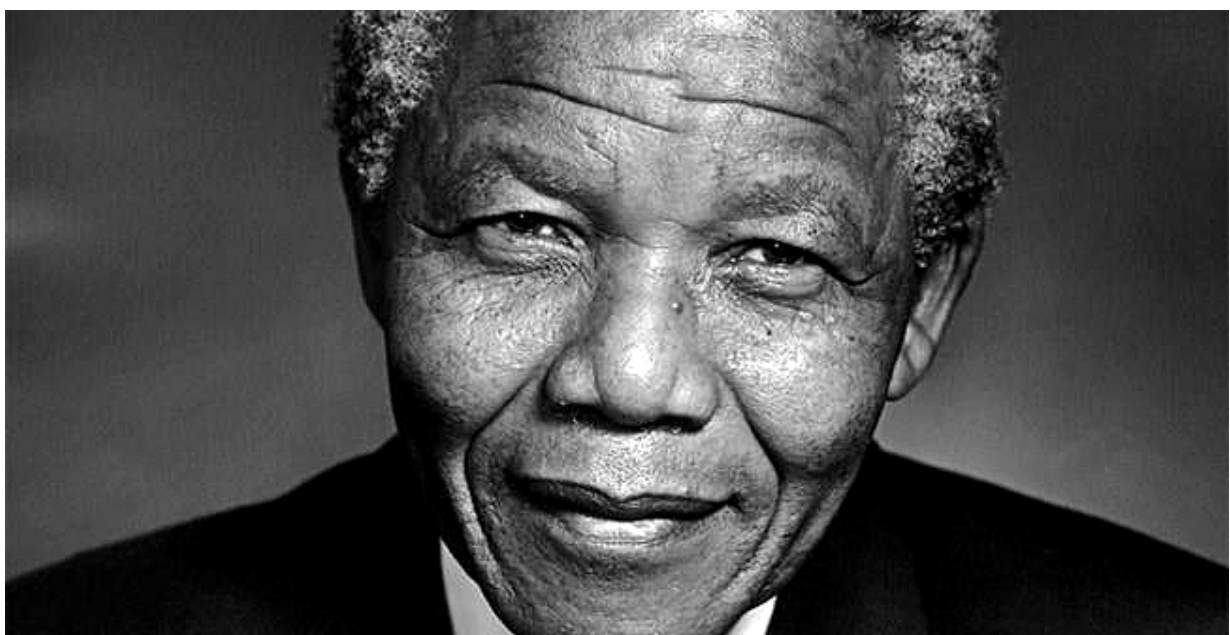
President Mandela inaugurated, 10 May 1994

In 1999 President Mandela retired at the age of 80, after serving a five-year term of office.

This was by now the most famous living man in the world, known affectionately to millions as “Madiba”, or simply, “Tata”.

One of his last, extraordinary contributions was his role in bringing the World Cup to South Africa in 2010, which was an occasion of joy for the whole country.

On his death in December 2013, the whole nation went into a profound mourning for weeks. Presidents and kings from around the world came to his funeral.



Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, First Democratically-Elected President of South Africa

Conclusion: Mandela the Revolutionary

Revolution is a long, steady drive that can demand the work of a lifetime. So it was with Nelson Mandela. His life was consequently full of events and consequences, of which this short account has only been able to mention a small selection.

Likewise, of the many other great and significant figures in the history of South Africa's liberation struggle, relatively few have been mentioned. Nevertheless, it should be sufficiently clear that Nelson Mandela was one among many, and that the ANC was his political home for the whole of his political lifetime.

It was in his relations with his comrades that Mandela's political nature was formed and carried out. Like those others, Nelson Mandela made his own contribution, and played his part.

Nelson Mandela was inseparable from the African National Congress. He was one of its main representative leaders from the time of A B Xuma in the 1940s, until the end of the century when universal-franchise democracy had been both won and consolidated in South Africa.

The ANC made him, and he helped to make the ANC. Together with the ANC and its allies, he helped to make South Africa.



This short account of the life of Mandela is one of a series of resource documents designed to assist teachers in basic education to providing occasional history lessons. It is timed to be available prior to the anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birth, on the 18th of July, 2015.

The two previous ones have been on June 16th (Sharpeville Day), and on June 26th, the day of the stay-away, of the Defiance Campaign, and of the Freedom Charter.

The next in the series will relate to South African Women's Day, 9th August (2015), which is the anniversary of the women's anti-pass-law march on Pretoria.



With Graça Machel



Nelson Mandela passed away on 5 December, 2013